

Choose Pharmacy media campaign

Summary:

To mark the countdown to World Pharmacist Day (Saturday, 25 September 2021), and to engage young people to actively consider Pharmacy as a course choice during the UCAS application window, Health Education England and NHS Careers have just launched a series of short films and resources that showcase the diversity of pharmacy roles available. These assets will be shared across different media platforms to promote a career in pharmacy.

The ambition is to help break down perceptions and introduce a new generation to the varied roles available to qualified Pharmacists and Pharmacy Technicians, demonstrating three key reasons why students should choose pharmacy as a career:

1. Pharmacy is intellectually stimulating
2. Pharmacists are agents of social good
3. A career in pharmacy is rewarding

Films, images, quotes and interview opportunities are available in the Choose Pharmacy toolkit and provided below.

Rationale behind the campaign:

As part of the ambitions outlined in the NHS Long Term plan, Pharmacy professionals are increasingly being deployed into new care settings such as general practice, care homes, Urgent and Emergency Care settings and in NHS 111 centres, working as an integral part of the multidisciplinary team. Through the Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme (ARRS), the NHS is providing funding for an additional 26,000 roles in primary care settings over the coming years, with Pharmacists and Pharmacy Technicians being seen as central to this workforce expansion.

The campaign launch coincides with **World Pharmacist Day (Saturday, 25 September 2021)** and continues beyond **Pharmacy Technicians Day (Tuesday, 19 October 2021)**.

UCAS applications for pharmacy degrees starting in 2022 are open from Tuesday, 07 September 2021 – Saturday, 26 January 2022

Objectives of the campaign

- Promote pharmacy as a career option
- Ignite passion in students to want to pursue a career in pharmacy
- Showcase the varied roles and impact the profession has on patients and public.
- Target misconceptions about the role of a pharmacist

Target audience

- Students completing A Levels in Chemistry (and Mathematics/ Sciences) and looking to go to university in 2022 (primary)
- Their teachers and careers advisors

Call to action of the campaign

We would love to generate support across the pharmacy sector for this campaign, so have provided some further information about this and how you can get involved in our Choose Pharmacy toolkit.

Case studies

The case study films available are:

Name	Role	Location
Ali Hamad	Trainee Hospital Pharmacist	Leeds
Bhavisha Patel	Community Pharmacist	Wokingham
Min Teo	General Practice Pharmacist and Co-Clinical Director of Local Primary Care Network	Kent and Medway
James Wood	Director of Contractor & Local Pharmaceutical committee support at PSNC	London
Zeenat Beg	Graduate Teaching Assistant, Pharmacist, Full-time PHD	Reading

Quotes

Basil Alackal, Trainee Pharmacist, Chichester, enjoys the intellectual stimuli and personal development provided by pharmacy always adapting and evolving: *“Pharmacy is always changing and innovating. There are always new processes, new systems in place to improve upon what we’re doing and provide the best service... I definitely believe that I have developed in terms of my core skills.”*

For **Sally Farmer, Community Pharmacist, Taunton**, interacting with patients is one of the most important parts of her job. *“The most rewarding moments of my journey so far are every time I could make a difference to a patient’s daily life and every time I’ve helped to improve their health, and how that helps their family, their friends, and just makes their life better.”*

Mona Qassim, Specialist Mental Health Pharmacist, Reading, acknowledges that with a pharmacy degree there are lots of options. *“That’s what surprised me once I got into it. I was able to work in mental health. I was able to teach. I was able to expand on research, and other things which never came across when I first went into the role...I’ve got so much variety in my week that there’s never a boring week, never a boring day. I’m constantly learning.”*

As **Min Teo, General Pharmacist, Medway and Kent** summarises: *“If you become a pharmacist, you won’t regret it. There are so many roles coming up. The sector is opening up, from community pharmacy, general practice and industry, and healthcare reform is coming. I would like to be in a role that is quite flexible, that has elements of business, management, science and helping people. Pharmacy seems to have a bit of everything. This is a very versatile role... You have*

scientific knowledge, you can go into research. You have the people skills, you can be with patients. You learn how to deal with different healthcare professionals.”

Helen Porter, Pharmacy Dean London and Southeast at HEE: *“Patients and the public are increasingly relying on the support and expertise of the pharmacy workforce to help them live longer healthier lives. We need to ensure that pharmacy is seen as an attractive career choice so we can meet the demand for workforce expansion. Given that the roles in pharmacy are very diverse and changing at pace, key to achieving this is making sure people know what a career in pharmacy looks like, so it’s top of the list.”*

Shane Costigan, Associate Head of Pharmacy London and Southeast at HEE: *“To meet the current and future needs of patients and the public, we need to grow the pharmacy workforce and ensure that pharmacy is seen as the attractive, varied, and dynamic health and care career choice that it is.”*

For further information about the Pharmacy Career workstream: Shane Costigan, Associate Head of Pharmacy London and Southeast at HEE: Shane.Costigan@hee.nhs.uk